

Chairwoman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Denson, and Members of the House Families, Aging, and Human Services Committee – thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 496

I am a mother of five who gave birth to my first in a hospital with an OBGYN, and then the following four each at home with midwives. I made the decision to plan home births with midwife care after much study and research that convinced me that such a choice would be the safest option for me. I am now a certified birth doula and childbirth educator as well as a student midwife.

It is the right of every parent to choose how and where they birth. The maternal and infant outcomes prove that home birth with midwifery care is as safe or safer than hospital birth.

As a parent, I remain committed to choosing home birth with midwifery care as long as I and my baby would be appropriate low-risk candidates. However, there have been several obstacles that I have had to navigate in doing so.

Our current legal system limits the ability of CPMs to provide their clients with routine ultrasounds and other testing that ensure that a client is low-risk enough to make home birth a relatively safe option.  
HB 496 can change that.

Our current legal system does not allow CPMs to carry life-saving medications for unexpected emergencies in birth. HB 496 can change that.

Our current legal system creates a situation where hospitals and emergency personnel arent required to recognize midwives as a part of the care team, which can hinder continuity of care in the event of a necessary hospital transfer during labor. HB 496 can change that.

Parents should not be caught between two separate systems of care when they want a home birth \*and\* routine medical screens and treatments. We need to give them a legal route to have both, for the very best possible outcomes for parents and babies across the state.

This is why I ask you today to please support HB 496.

Kailyn Browning, SBD